



**FRANKS & BRENKWITZ, LLP**  
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**LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL**

**Date:** 5-17-22

**To:** Town of Los Gatos, Community Development Dept.

**Attention:** Ryan M. Safty, Associate Planner

**Job:** 246 Alameda Ave. (510-14-019)

**We transmit:** Letter regarding Front Setback

Ryan- at last March's HPC meeting, the commissioners decided to recommend consideration and research into a greater front setback for the project. Currently, we are showing the minimum 15' front setback to the front porch columns, and 21' to the front house wall, and 40' to the second story front wall.

We wanted to clarify how we established the front yard setback to the front porch columns of this project by averaging the setbacks of the adjacent buildings. Please see Sheet A-2.1, which demonstrates this. If one draws an imaginary line from the adjacent building's front corner column to the west and the existing building's front porch column to the east, you can see that our project's front corner column fits exactly behind this line which is 15'-5" behind the front property line,. Thus, our front-most column is located based on the average of the adjacent building's columns. In terms of the front setback then, we averaged our front setback between the 2 adjacent properties' front setbacks ( $20' + 29'-2" = 30'-10" / 2 = 15'-5"$ ).

The Consulting Architect Cannon Design Group in their letter of 11-4-21 also reasoned that an averaging of adjacent front setback was appropriate per code section 2.2.1 (*Where adjacent homes have differing setbacks, try placing the home such that it uses and average of the two*). They also suggested that if the project front setback was not increased, that alternatively the upper floor massing could be reduced by making a roof change, which we did (sloping away from the street).

To further explore the notion of increasing the front setback and at the Town's suggestion, we undertook a study of the existing front setbacks all along Almendra Ave., from North Santa Cruz Ave. to Massol Ave. There are 26 existing structures that make up the study, and are a mix of residential and commercial uses. Sheet A 2.1 shows the results of this study. As one can see, there are 8 parcels (shown hatched) whose building's front setbacks are either equal to or less than our project's proposed 15' front setback. Statistically, this accounts for 31% of all the properties. This certainly demonstrates that we are conforming to almost a third of the existing properties and maintaining neighborhood compatibility.

We are concerned that if the front setback is increased, the vehicle maneuvering space out of the rear garage will be compromised. This was also discussed at the HPC meeting. Right now, we have it designed so that the vehicles can back out of the garage in the space between the garage and house, and proceed facing forward towards the street. If this area is compromised by increasing the front setback, vehicles will have to back out onto the street or back into the garage from the street, which is not ideal.

We feel that keeping the front setback at 15' as shown is compatible with the existing neighborhood, and results in an averaging between adjacent structures as recommended per Town code. The home's upper floor front wall setback of 40' goes well beyond the required minimum setback and helps reduce the apparent mass of the project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brett Brenkwitz', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Brett Brenkwitz, Architect C 25,131